

*The Duties attending a proper Discharge
of the Ministry.*

A

S E R M O N

Preached to the

C L E R G Y

OF THE

Archdeaconry of SUFFOLK,

AT A

V I S I T A T I O N

April 28, &c. 1748.

By HENRY GOODALL, A.M.
Archdeacon of Suffolk.

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1897

ARTICLE

NOTICE

BY

MR. J. H. COOKE

OF THE

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TO
The Reverend C L E R G Y
Of the
Archdeaconry of S U F F O L K.

Reverend Brethren,

THE desire you were pleased to express upon my Visitation, of seeing in print what I then delivered from the Pulpit, was an Honor that I had little reason to expect, and what the slender merit of the Performance would in no wise have entitled me to. Give me leave therefore to consider it, as an instance of your profound
regard

regard to the appointment of that great and good Prelate, our late most worthy Diocesan; whose paternal care and indulgence, during the whole time that He presided over us, you so feelingly mentioned and so thankfully acknowledged, that I should not do Justice to you, if I did not bear this public Testimony to the deep Sense which you professed to have of His Lordship's goodness; nor to myself, if I did not as openly testify the warmest Resentments of a grateful Mind, as for that continued series of favorable regards which He has ever shewn me, from my first Admission into the University; so in particular for that distinguishing Mark of His esteem, with which His Lordship was pleased to honor me, by putting me in a Station that makes me bear so near a relation to you.

DEDICATION.

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I am very sensible how difficult it is to maintain with decency a Character, that places me in so public a point of View; and that too of Persons so much abler than myself, to go through with reputation the Duties of the Archidiaconal Function. Yet I hope and am perswaded from your obliging Behaviour to me, that you will not only readily concur with me in every instance, that may promote the Credit of our most holy Profession; but give me your advice and assistance, upon difficult points that may arise in the execution of my Office.

I am the more confirmed in an early Pre-
sage of our future Agreement, from your
ready Approbation of the moderate Prin-
ciples advanced in this Discourse, and your
consequent Attachment to our happy Con-
stitution

stitution, the Support and Bulwark of our Civil and Religious Liberties. That this Agreement may always subsist between us, without any interruption, is, my Reverend Brethren, the most earnest request, and will be the hearty endeavour of

Your very affectionate

and most obedient Servant

*Gaius College,
Aug. 1. 1748.*

HENRY GOODALL.

THE
DUTIES

ATTENDING

A proper Discharge of the MINISTRY.

2 COR. VI. 3.

*Giving no Offence in any thing, that the Ministry
be not blamed.*

SUCH is the Weight and Importance of the Ministerial Office, that whether we consider the Preparations necessary to qualify us for it, or the Difficulties attending it, or the consequent good or evil Effect it must have upon Society, as we behave ourselves properly or improperly in the execution of it; they will each of them afford us sufficient matter of Caution and Circumspection in our sacred Function: and all of them together cannot fail of enforcing, in the strongest manner, the necessity of spending our whole Time, of devoting all our Thoughts, and exerting every Power and Faculty that GOD has given us, in the Discharge of it.

WITH regard to the first of these points, the *Qualifications* required to prepare us for this sacred Office;
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it is not in this as in other Professions, where a competent Skill in those branches of Knowledge which more immediately concern them, may be sufficient to exempt Men from the Charge of Ignorance in those Professions, or perhaps carry them through them with figure and credit; but we have a large field before us, that takes in, if not the whole Circle of Arts and Sciences, yet a larger portion of them than falls to the share of any other Profession whatsoever: in which we are by no means at liberty to expatiate or not at our pleasure, but where each of them calls for our Exercise and Employment, in proportion to the strength of our natural Abilities, and to such Helps and Advantages as Providence has kindly thrown in our way.

A Critical Skill in the learned Languages, where it may be had, is of very great use; but a moderate degree of Knowledge in them is absolutely necessary, to unlock those sacred Repositories of Divine Truths, which are the Rule and Measure of our Faith and Practice. For though the World in general may well be excused the trouble of coming at this Key of Knowledge, as they may safely confide in those Translations that are given us of the Scriptures; yet nothing can be said to excuse Their Neglect, whose Business it is to open and expound them, if They take not due care to improve upon That Foundation, which has been laid in them by an ingenious Education.

A Knowledge in History seems no less useful and expedient ; that thence we may be able to shew how this Ark of GOD, which contains so precious a Treasure of Divine Truths, has sailed down the Stream of Time without suffering considerably in its passage. It is farther useful, as we shall thereby be furnished with an easy Explication of such Phrases and Expressions, as are drawn from the Usage and Custom of antient Times ; and more clearly understand the Doctrines illustrated by Allusions to them.

AND, as the Infidelity and Scepticism of the present Age call us frequently back to the Proof of those Principles, on which Religion must rest ; so the Study of Nature, and of those general Laws by which the World is maintained in the Order and Harmony that result from them, is of principal use to confront the bold and insolent Charges too frequently thrown out against the Providence of GOD in the Government of it. As is likewise a strict examination of the Principles of Moral Science, and the Agreement of these with the Precepts of the Gospel, to obviate the Objections of Men of perverse and sceptical Minds, who read the Scriptures with no other view but to find fault with them ; and are so obstinately bent to oppose the Progress of the Christian Institution, that they scruple not to make those excellent Refinements on the Morals of the Heathens, to be met with in the Gospel, their principal Head of Accusation against it.

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BUT I forbear to enlarge upon Topics, on which indeed I might well have been excused saying any thing at all, before so learned an Audience, were it not that my Subject led me to it, as an Argument to enforce our application to these Studies, that we may always be prepared *to give to them that ask us, a Reason of the Faith and Hope that is in us*; and thereby avoid that Confusion in ourselves, and Scandal to our Profession, which our Ignorance must produce: and may moreover be qualified (if occasion shall require it of us) to enter the Lists with our Adversaries, *to fight the good Fight of Faith*, and become Champions and Combatants for the Christian Cause.

I procede therefore to consider the *Difficulties* attending us in the execution of our Office; which are great and manifold. For though it is not now (GOD be thanked!) as in the primitive Ages of the Church; when all who embraced the Faith of CHRIST, had little better to expect than to suffer Persecution for it; and when the Preachers and Publishers of it were almost sure to seal the Truth of it with their Blood; yet the Duties of our Function, if they bear not so threatening an Aspect, are such as will call for an incessant Labor and Watchfulness in the Discharge of them. To inform the Ignorant, reduce the Wandering, and reclame the Obstinate, is a Work that will require much Thought and Study, to furnish

nish us with proper Materials, and enable us to execute it effectually ; a great deal of Skill and Address in the management of these, that the Word of GOD thus preached by us may not be barren and unfruitful ; and moreover, a good degree of Patience and Perseverance, that we may not too soon be discouraged, if the Return of our Labors should be greatly disproportionate to the pains we have taken.

TO convince the Understandings of Men, and shew them what they are to believe and practise, is perhaps no difficult Atchievement with the bulk of Mankind : A thorough Knowledge of the Scriptures, and a Readiness at quoting them, may be sufficient to induce their Belief in the Fundamental Points of a Christian's Faith ; but to influence the Heart, and fix the Affections, is not so much the Work of the Closet. For this, we must study Men as well as Books, and look into the Springs and Motives of Human Actions ; that thence we may be able to strike the more effectual Blow at their Follies and Vices.

AND as the Tempers of Men are very different, so do they require a different Treatment from us : Those of a softer Mould are more easily wrought upon by a perswasive Eloquence ; by setting before them the superior Advantages of Virtue and Religion, and shewing them the agreement of the Precepts of CHRIST, with the Duties that flow from our

rational Nature and social Capacity: Whilst others there are of a Frame less tender and delicate; who require a rougher Handling, and are not to be awakened to a sense of their Duty, but by alarming their Fears, with the Danger of their present secure and careless state.

GREAT regard is likewise to be had to the Prejudices of those, who divide and separate themselves from us. These are not to be overcome at once: Education has given them a deep Root, which must first be loosened by the gentler methods of Persuasion and Kindness, by doing them every office of Friendship that lies in our power, and shewing all good will to the Privileges and Indulgences which the Law has granted them; and then we may hope, after giving such evident marks of a friendly disposition towards them, to heal that Schism in the Church occasioned by them, which still continues to marr and spoil the glorious Work of the Reformation. Nay, if after all these generous Overtures, they remain stiff in their Opinions, and obstinate in their Prejudices, we must however bear with them, and wait for other opportunities of bringing them over; when perhaps by a long trial and experience of our blameless Behaviour to them, they may at length be won by our good Conversation, to entertain likewise a favorable opinion of the Cause we espouse.

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BUT, if it thus concerns us to behave with Caution, towards those that are *without* the Pale of our National Church, it is surely our Duty, in a more eminent and especial manner, to avoid all Occasion of Offence to those of the *same* Communion *with* us. These have put themselves more immediately under our Guardianship and Direction, and therefore may very well expect from us all that pious care and tender regard for their Spiritual Welfare, which we can possibly shew them. As their proper Pastors, we are not only to feed and instruct them; but to watch over them with a godly jealousy, and to keep them from being drawn aside by the Speciousness of Error, or the prevailing Influence of Fashion and Custom, from a right Faith and sober Behaviour.

THE more effectually to secure this desirable End of all our Labors, we should set before them in our own Lives and Conversations an exemplary Pattern for them to copy after. We should go before them in the practice of all Christian Duties; that by giving them so fair a Specimen of our own Sincerity, in the Belief of those Principles which we preach and inculcate to them, we may fix their Faith on a firmer Basis, and give it a Foundation too steady to be moved *with every wind of Doctrine, and cunning Craftiness wherewith the Adversary lies in wait to deceive them.* Example cannot fail to recommend
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and enforce the Exercise of Christian Duties, beyond the power of Argument; as This must oftentimes exceed the Reach of common Hearers, whereas That is a sensible Proof, which is level to every Capacity. There is no one but can see and feel the Evidence, which a good Life must afford to the Sanctions that enforce it; and the Esteem it commands will always be sure to promote an Imitation of it, as we are naturally biased in favour of the kind and beneficent, who are constantly doing good Offices to us, and are insensibly led to copy the Manners and Behaviour of those we love.

AND this Diligence we are obliged to give to the several Duties of our Function, as the *Ministers of Christ*, and *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*; whose Office it is to dispense to the various Parts of the Household their due Share of Labor and Provision, as the Exigencies of the Family shall require; as *Embassadors*, to whom is committed the Word of Reconciliation; and as *Pastors* of the Flock of CHRIST, who have the Charge and Care of them, and must give an exact account of the Management of so important a Trust, when the Great *Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls* shall appear to take cognizance thereof; that we may do this *with Joy, and not with Grief*.

BUT we are further bound to be careful *that the Ministry be not blamed* through any neglect in our Office,

Office, on account of the ill *Effect* which this may have upon Society. For there is a close and intimate Connection between the Church and the State; and this Alliance between them calls for our particular Attention to the Safety and Security of the latter. The public Provisions that are made for our Support and Maintenance bind this Duty still stronger upon us; and engage us not only to pray for its Welfare and Prosperity, but to use our best Endeavours to promote them. And what is so likely to secure the Welfare of it, as the Practice of Virtue and Religion? or who so able to encourage the Exercise of these, as an Order of Men set apart by their sacred Office for the Instruction of others? and who for this purpose are exempted from those secular Cares, which employ the rest of the World. As the People are *to seek the Law at their Mouth*, so if this be properly enforced by a grave and prudent Behaviour, it will come with the greater weight upon their Minds, and be very likely to produce that universal Righteousness, which the Prophet assures us *exalteth a Nation*.

ON the other hand, if They, whose Duty it is to minister in holy things, and who are by their Office as it were sequester'd from the World, and from the Business and Pleasures of it, do nevertheless so entangle themselves with its Cares, as to lose their Weight and Influence with the People; they thereby betray
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that Trust which was reposed in them, and become Debtors to the Public.

HERE then arises an additional Argument with us, to avoid all occasions of Offences ; that we may be the better able to discharge the Obligations we are under from our public Support and Maintenance, to promote the Interest and Welfare of that Community, which has made such provision for us.

NOR is it merely a Natural Duty which we owe to the State, and a suitable Return for the Favor and Countenance it affords us ; our Religion likewise bears a friendly disposition towards it : Not only as Religion corrects and moderates our Passions, and thus puts the Knife to those redundant Enormities, which, without this care to prune and check them, would prove the Annoyance of its Quiet ; but as it strongly recommends and encourages those Virtues, which are immediately productive of its Welfare and Felicity ; that Humility and Modesty, that mutual Forbearance and Charity and Love to each other, which so largely contribute to promote the Peace and Order and Harmony of every Society.

THIS is that mild and gentle Spirit so friendly to the State, which the Gospel breaths forth in almost every page of it, and makes it the indispensable Duty of its Ministers to spread and propagate.
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And could Men in general be brought to this Temper of Mind, there would be little occasion for Human Constitutions and Appointments to hold them together; but as the Depravity of our Nature renders it too fit a Soil for the Growth of those blacker and fouler Passions of Discontent, and Envy, and Jealousy; and demonstrates the absolute Necessity of Civil Government to curb and restrain their Power, and prevent the Inconvenience that would follow, if these were once permitted to range at large without controul or opposition; so Christianity, that it might not be wanting to countenance and support it, requires of its Followers to submit *to every Ordinance of Man*; and that not merely to avoid the Sword of Justice, which however the Magistrate beareth *not in vain*; but from a Sense of the Duty we owe Him, as GOD's Vicegerent and Minister.

THIS Duty we of the Clergy are commanded to press upon the People, as that which they are too apt of themselves to overlook and neglect. *Put them in mind*, saith the Apostle, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good Work*, that may advance and promote the Good of the Community. There is a strange Perverseness in Human Nature, which disposes Men to cavil and object to every thing which they have not the Direction of themselves; and this Disposition is in nothing so observable, as in the Opposition which
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they give to Public Measures. How ready do we find them upon all occasions to arraign and condemn them, and this under the cover of a Zeal for Liberty! But if Order and Government be the best means of securing our Liberties, by tying up the Hands of Men of such turbulent Spirits as are most likely to invade them; it cannot, surely! be a prudent Step to lessen the Characters of Those, who have the Direction and Management of Public Affairs; but on the contrary, to esteem them highly ourselves, and to encourage this Esteem in others: For our Behaviour under them, will of course in a good measure depend upon our Opinion of them; and if we cannot be brought to think well of them, we shall hardly pay them that chearful obedience, to which they are entitled.

AND hence appears the Necessity of instilling into the Minds of the People committed to our Care, Principles of Loyalty and Allegiance to their Sovereign; and of pressing them with every argument that can possibly encourage their Subjection to their lawful Superiors: that thus the Wheels of Government may move on freely and without molestation, when Men of every Rank and Degree under it, are disposed to pay an Obedience to it *not for Wrath, but for Conscience sake*: when they look upon every Civil Constitution as the Appointment of Providence, and consider *the Powers that be, as*
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ordained of GOD; and from this Conviction of the Origin of them, are inclined to yield them a religious Obedience and Submission.

THIS Disposition will be the more confirmed and improved in them, when they see these Instructions exemplified in our own Conduct. And therefore, That which, among many other Arguments, should induce us to express with a becoming Warmth and Earnestness the Duty and Affection, which we owe to the best of KINGS, and our zealous Attachment to the most excellent of *Constitutions*, is the Influence which such a Behaviour cannot fail of having upon others; when they see us in our Practice so steadily adhere to the Opinions and Principles we profess.

BUT what is of the greatest Importance, and deserves most to be weighed and considered by us, is our Behaviour and Conduct amongst ourselves. For here we act in a distinct and separate Body; and being as it were detached from the other Parts of the Community, like *a City upon a Hill*, we have the Eyes of the World upon us: for which reason, it concerns us to be more particularly cautious in the regulation of our Actions, that by them we give no just Exception to our Brethren; who will be, as we find by that propensity in them to censure and condemn one another, but too apt to take exception on the slenderest Pretences. As they may very well expect

expect to see a more exact Conformity to the Precepts of CHRIST in the Lives of Those, whose Profession it is to open and explain them to others; they will be more than commonly curious and inquisitive after them; and either despise us for the Faults and Blemishes they observe, or draw them into Imitation. On both which accounts it behoves us to be always on our guard, and behave with such Neglect and Indifference to worldly Pleasures, with that mutual Charity and Forbearance to one another, and such Submission to our Spiritual Superiors; as in every Duty public and private, and in every relation which we bear to Them and to each other, to become fit Examples to the several Flocks, over whom the good Providence of GOD has made us Overseers.

F I N I S.